

NINTH CIRCUIT 2002 HR CONFERENCE

Bringing Out the Best in Your Employees: How to Address Challenging Situations

November 5, 2002
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon
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OBJECTIVES



- ✓ To explore how group protocols can be used to address difficult situations
- ✓ To learn cross-cultural communication tools.
- ✓ To understand effective cultural competency skills.



AGENDA

Overview of Session

- Learning Model

How Group Protocols Can Be Used to Address Difficult Situations

- Definition of Protocol
- Protocols Worksheet

Cross-Cultural Communication Tools

- Comparing Communication Styles Across Cultures
- Degrees of Directness/Indirectness
- Cross-cultural Communication Misunderstandings



Cultural Competency Skills

- Practicing Cultural Competency in Groups

Taking Action

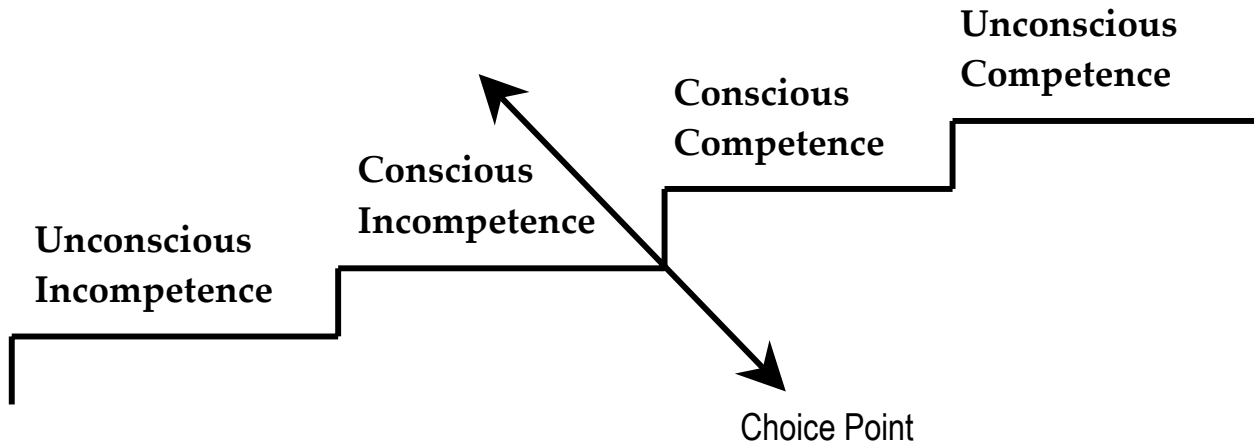
- “AHAs”

Completion

- Acknowledgments
- Evaluations



LEARNING MODEL



- **Unconscious Incompetence:** We do or say something without being aware of the possible negative or hurtful impact of our actions or our words. *"We don't know what we don't know."*
- **Conscious Incompetence:** Someone (or something) has made us aware of our words or deeds and we begin to realize their impact. We become conscious that what we said or did may not have had a positive effect. *"Brings habit to awareness."*
- **Conscious Competence:** At this stage we are changing our own behavior by being intentional and mindful. We've made a choice and we begin practicing new behavior by changes in our words or actions. *"Practice, Practice, Practice."*
- **Unconscious Competence:** We have fully integrated the new behavior and don't have to think about it; it simply has become a part of us. *"A new habit is born."*



PROTOCOLS

A protocol is a procedure that enhances team progress, and if not addressed, can decrease cooperation or stymie synergistic decision making and strategies.

➤ **Protocols can:**

- Smooth the path toward the team goal;
- Be used to address uncomfortable, unproductive situations
- Address areas in which people withhold their participation
- Assist in areas where people have hot buttons.



➤ **The process to create a protocol is:**

1. The topic or concern about is
2. One protocol that would handle my concern is . . .

➤ **For example, learning more about how to support the adherence to following agreed-upon group guidelines or norms. Here's how the process would work:**

1. Topic/concern is: Having guidelines for our group with no way to support team members when the guidelines are not adhered to.
2. One protocol that would handle my concern is . . .

With two others, please brainstorm a potential protocol for this situation.

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PROTOCOLS WORKSHEET



Team protocols are ways in which the team as a whole, as well as individual team members, can address certain topics and concerns so that their goal can be reached. Here are several examples of team, and team member, topics that protocols can address.

SAMPLE TOPIC	SAMPLE PROTOCOL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team's decision making process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present ideas, learn, and use consensus decision making process. If team cannot reach a consensus decision in necessary time frame, team leader will decide.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting input: Need to establish a way for everyone to give input during a meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On key points, team leader will go around table and each member will give input. On telephone, go down list alphabetically.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language barriers among team members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone paraphrases what was said to ensure mutual understanding.

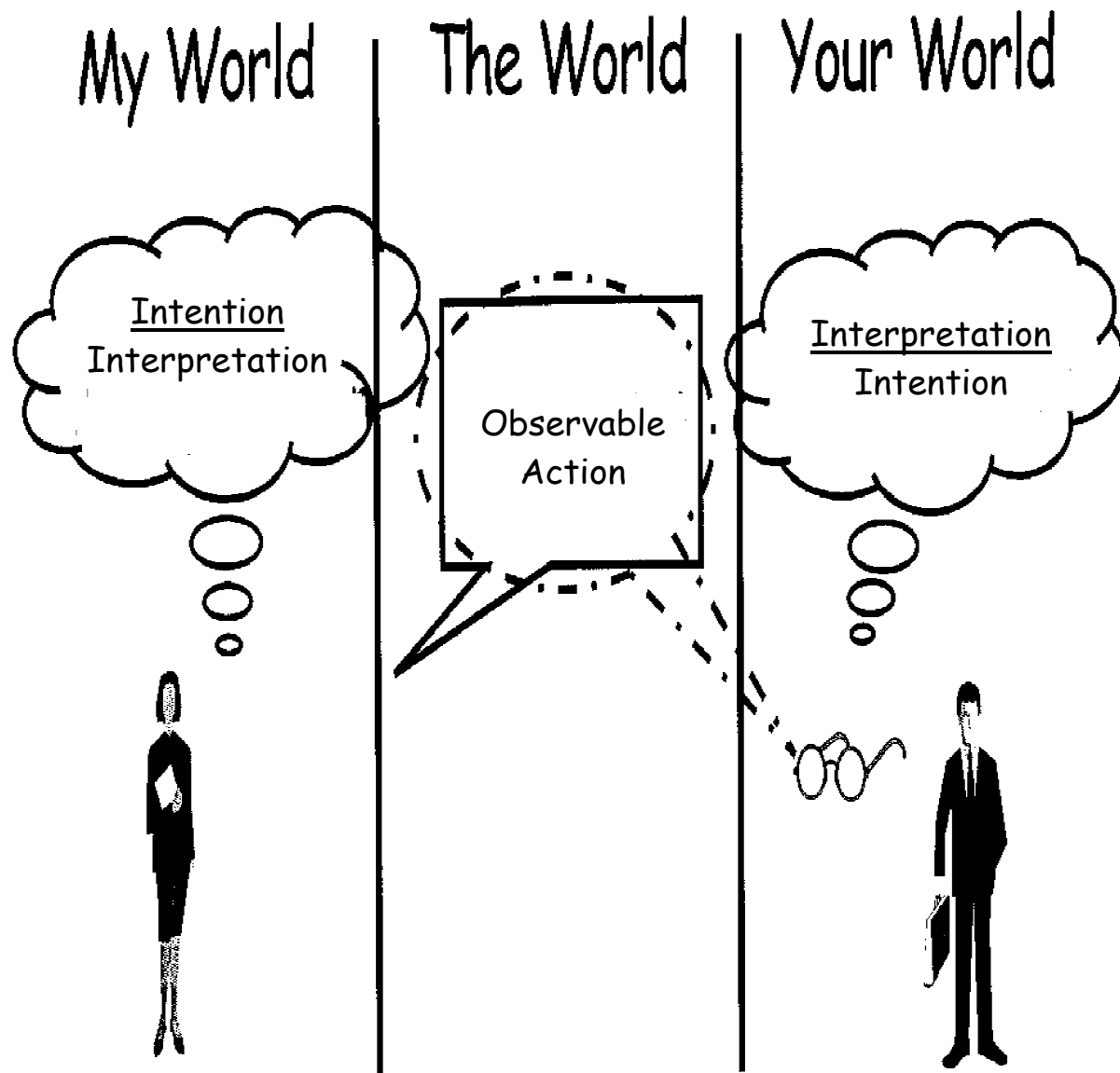
Use the table below to write down the topics and protocols that your team tentatively commits to:

TOPIC	PROTOCOL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowing someone to tell me when I have unintentionally offended them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing how to address conflict in cultures that are not comfortable with speaking openly about conflict. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dealing with various levels of technical ability and education within the work team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
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The Three Worlds



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COMPARING COMMUNICATION STYLES ACROSS CULTURES



In the following exercise, compare your American style of communication to the styles of some of your co-workers and members, especially those who have immigrated from other countries.

The continuum on the following page is on the degree of directness in communication. Notice there are poles of extremes described on opposite ends of the line. Read the two descriptions and put a vertical line somewhere along the continuum depending on which explanation you think more accurately describes the view of people from:

- Mainstream U.S. culture (*from European American/Caucasian background*).
- If you are different from that mainstream, put a vertical line with your initials to see where you place yourself.

Not everyone from U.S. culture takes the same view of course, but try nevertheless to make a generalization about the position of a typical person from U.S. culture on the degree of directness in communication.

For example, if you think the description under Direct (*left side*) more accurately describes U.S. culture's position on this matter, you will put your mark nearer to the left.

Think of the continuum as being divided into five segments, starting at the left:

Extreme left	Put your mark here if the text at the left describes U.S. culture very accurately.
Halfway to the middle	Put your mark here if the text at the left is more or less accurate about U.S. culture.
In the middle	Put your mark here if U.S. culture is a true combination of the text at the right and left.
Extreme right	Put your mark here if the text at the right describes your culture very accurately.

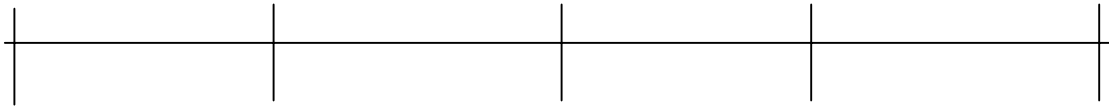
After you have marked the continuum for mainstream U.S. culture, compare that culture with peoples' communication styles who come from:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| • Mexico | • Japan |
| • Russia | • China |
| • Southeast Asia | • Germany |
| • African Countries | • Middle East |

Adapted from Craig Storti, *Figuring Foreigners Out* (1991), pp. 95-96



DEGREE OF DIRECTNESS



Direct

People say what they mean and mean what they say; there is no need to read between the lines; it's best to tell it like it is; people are less likely to imply and more likely to say exactly what they are thinking; yes means yes.

Indirect

People don't always say what they mean or mean exactly what they say; you have to read between the lines; people are more likely to suggest or imply than to come out and say what they think; you can't always tell it like it is (*so what if that upsets the other person?*); yes may mean maybe or even no.

Notes: _____

Adapted from Craig Storti, *Figuring Foreigners Out* (1999), p. 97.



CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

MISUNDERSTANDINGS

This chart presents a number of common communication techniques and shows how the different meanings attached to these techniques by direct and indirect communications lead to inevitable misinterpretations and misunderstandings.

For each number, read the first three columns and then in the last column, on the right, write how you think each type of communication would interpret the other when he or she uses this technique. The first one has been done for you as an example.

Technique Used by Speaker	Meaning in a Direct Culture	Meaning in an Indirect Culture	Possible Misinterpretations
1. Understatement (<i>"I have one small suggestion."</i>)	Understatements are often taken literally; in this case, the listener would assume the speaker doesn't feel strongly about this matter.	This is the way to express considerable interest in/concern about the matter.	<i>A person from a direct culture will think the speaker does not have a strong opinion on the matter.</i> <i>A person from an indirect culture will think the speaker is very interested or concerned.</i>
2. Changing the subject.	The person wants to go on to a new subject.	The person does not want to talk further about the subject now under discussion.	



CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

MISUNDERSTANDINGS (cont'd)

Technique Used by Speaker	Meaning in a Direct Culture	Meaning in an Indirect Culture	Possible Misinterpretations
3. Saying yes.	Agreement, approval, acceptance, understanding.	Mere acknowledgement that the person heard you; being polite and respectful.	
4. Saying nothing in response to a proposal or suggestion.	The person does not object, disagree with, or have a problem with the proposal/ suggestion.	The person does not approve or does not think it is his or her place to comment and would rather say nothing than criticize (<i>especially if the proposal is made in a group setting</i>).	
5. Not mentioning something in a conversation (<i>the significance of what is not said</i>).	Not saying something means you have nothing to say, one way or the other, about that topic.	Not mentioning something can be a way of expressing discomfort about or indicating there is a problem with that topic.	

Adapted from Craig Storti, *Figuring Foreigners Out* (1999), pp. 101-103.



COMMUNICATION: YOUR CHOICE WITH EVERY INTERACTION

Interaction	Discount (-) Why?	Business Only (0) Why?	Human Level Connection (+) Why?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe recent communication with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Someone who reports to you (2) Peer/co-lateral (3) Your manager/supervisor 			

What could you have said/done/or been to make each one of the above a “+” interaction?

- Discount:** Make someone feel of lesser importance than me, my work, my position, etc. This is a minus experience.

- Business Only:** Talk about business and nothing else. A “0” or neutral experience.

- Human Level:** Recognizing the person as a worthy and unique individual, leaving them feeling valued and valuable because of the interaction. This is a “plus” experience.

Adapted from Barbara Giaz, *C.A.R.E. Packages* (1997), pp. 10 & 11.



PRACTICING CULTURAL COMPETENCY IN GROUPS

Here are many different recommendations to create a positive and productive work environment where team members are valued for the diversity they bring. These “tips” are practical and can be used in everyday interactions within your work group.

- 1a. Count how many times you speak and keep track of how long you speak.
- 1b. Count how many times other people speak and keep track of how long they speak.
2. Practice noticing who's in the room at meetings – how many men, how many women, how many white people, how many people of color, is it majority heterosexual, are there “out” gays/lesbians, what are people's class backgrounds, etc.? Don't assume to know people, and also work at being more aware.
3. Be conscious of how often you are actively listening to what other people are saying as opposed to just waiting your turn and/or thinking about what you'll say next.
4. Practice going to meetings focused on listening and learning; got to some meeting and do not speak at all.
- 5a. Count how many times you put ideas out to the group.
- 5b. Count how many times you support other people's ideas for the group.
6. Practice supporting people by asking them to expand on ideas and get more in-depth information before you decide to not support their idea.
- 7a. Think about whose work and contribution to the group gets recognized.
- 7b. Practice recognizing more people for the work they do and try to do it more often.
8. Practice asking more people what they think about meetings, ideas, actions, strategy and vision. Sometimes people tend to talk amongst those similar to themselves and develop strong bonds that then manifest in their work together. This creates an internal organizing culture that is alienating for most people. Developing respect and solidarity across race, class, gender, national origin, age, sexuality, etc., is complex and difficult, but absolutely critical – and liberating.



PRACTICING CULTURAL COMPETENCY IN GROUPS (CONT'D)

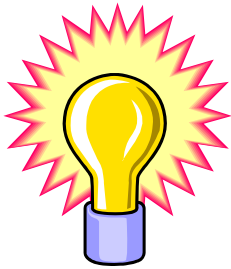
9. Be aware of how often you ask people to do something as opposed to asking other people “what needs to be done?”
10. Think about and struggle with the saying “you will be needed when you realize that you are not needed.”
11. Struggle with and work with the model of group leadership that says that the responsibility of leaders is to help develop more leaders, and think about what this means to you.
12. Remember that change is a process, and that our individual transformation is intimately interconnected with making any change.
13. Day-to-day patterns of power and control are the glue that maintain systems of exclusion and domination.
14. Other actions you can take or things you can say to enhance your cultural competency in groups?

[illegible]

Adapted from Internet material.



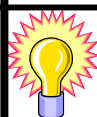
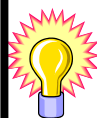
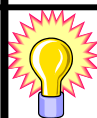
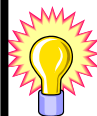
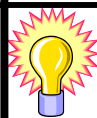
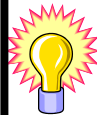
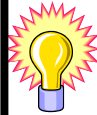
AHA SHEET



AHAs!!!

SO WHATS

(How can I use this "AHA" to be an even more effective in bringing out the best in employees?)



Some questions to increase your learning in this workshop:

What did you **NOTICE**?

What did you **LEARN**?

What do you **WANT**?

What will you **DO**?

What will you **BE**?

What will you **ALLOW**?

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